

Board of Appeals
July 2, 2015
Mt. Pulaski High School

Present: Doug Thompson, Rick Sheley, Judi Graff, Bret Farmer

Chairman Thompson called the meeting to order at 7:30.

Approval of last meeting's minutes: Rick Sheley motioned to approve. Bret Farmer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Unfinished business: none

New Business: 7-CU-15 Meridien LLC proposes to construct and operate the Meridien Wind Farm Project in Logan County. The project will be located in the vicinity of the towns Elkhart, Broadwell and Mt. Pulaski. The project will consist of up to 81 wind energy conversion systems.

Judi Graff read the public notice on the meeting.

Doug Thompson swears in anyone intending to give testimony.

Mr. Wayne Woo presented for the Relight Project. He gave a summary of the project redesign and overview of Relight's operation. Project would provide 640 million KW per year. They have complied within the standards of the noise output. Operation and maintenance would staff 5 to 10 people. Mr. Woo discussed decommissioning, land payments and property taxes output.

Mr. Woo talked about property values concerns. He mentioned an insurance plan possibility for the 151 houses in the 1/3 mile area.

Wind Tax Subsidies would be \$183 million over the life of the project.

Ends presentation.

Doug Thompson asked about siting map with different setbacks. Mr. Woo said it shows possible and final set backs. Data sharing agreement? Woo- not signed yet. Will turbines all be the same? Woo- Intentions for all to be the same. What are the nonparticipating land payments? Woo- Simplifying by \$750 per parcel per year. Occupants that don't own but rent will receive \$250 per turbine within 3000 feet. Listed 3 options to connect to grid? Woo- We are consulting engineers. Interference from possible unlicensed companies (ie. internet, gps)? Woo- We will need to ask NTIA and do analysis to get information.

Public comments.

Cheryl Baker- She lives near turbines in the Railsplitter project. She said shadow flicker doesn't last and doesn't mind it.

Joely Boerma- There are benefits from turbines such as road access improved.

Mayor of Mt. Pulaski- Relight is good for jobs and economy.

Joan Buckles- There are opportunity for area improvements.

Leslie Hild- Roads will be improved. No other way to keep school in Mt. Pulaski.

Opposition.

Tom Martin- Representing Logan Co Residents for Responsible Land Use. The process for the project was going too fast, very few people involved and too many questions. He wants to keep an open mind and listen to both sides.

Gary Hickey- Requests a sunset provision of 5 years if no construction has started. What will happen if Meridien sells relight. In his research, Gary couldn't find much information on this company, especially its financial viability to actually complete project. Decommission numbers are not accurate. Number of turbines are too densely positioned. Woo- Relight is a private company that doesn't publicly announce financial information. The sunset idea is a good idea. Woo said noise studies were done by an expert, Mr. Neal. He did low frequency tests as well. Mr. Hickey there wasn't an archeological study done. Woo- said this study was in another study that was completed. Mr. Woo said proof of financial ability will need to get approval from partners. Mr. Hickey also asked about final connection. Mr. Woo said he is getting signed agreements and facility study finalized.

Corey Leonard-With the new locations a new noise study needs to be done along with new migratory bird study. Will D'Andrea said IDNR consulted and no new studies needed to be done.

Chris Cowan- Towers impede use of farm land.

Mike Nichols- Because of wife's condition won't be able to live in presence of turbines. They will have to move.

David Trainer- He is concerned about property values. Mr. Woo will look into property value insurance.

Gina Rue- She is concerned about health problems. The set back needs to be 1 to 2 miles.

Rick Sheley motioned to adjourn the meeting. Bret Farmer seconded the motion. Motion passed.

Meeting was adjourned. To be resumed on July 8 at 7:30.

July 8, 2015 Mt. Pulaski High School

Chairman Doug Thompson calls the meeting to order.

Present: Doug Thompson, Bret Farmer, Rick Sheley, Judi Graff

Doug Thompson swears in those intending to give testimony.

Rick Sheley makes a motion to continue discussion on tabled meeting. Bret Farmer seconds the motion. Motion passes.

Public Comments resumes:

Lisa Leonard- Presents about the effects of wind turbines. She visited some homes that were in the midst of a wind farm. The people she talked to were reluctant to comment because of gag clauses in contracts.

Sheryl Martin talked about Meridien's proposal to the Mt. Pulaski school board. The board rejected with a vote 4 to 2.

Terry Coppenger spoke about the funds listed for the Relight project's decommissioning was not enough.

Renee Martin talked about concerns of shadow flicker on roads. She also was concerned about the nuisance enforcement.

Derick Martin asked if Relight has been in contact with leaseholders since the last meetings? Mr. Woo said no, but has tried to make contact. Mr. Woo gives out his email address.

Tom Martin stated that the project doesn't have local representation to communicate with. The company shows a lack of trust and transparency. Everyone that has represented Meridien have been located away from Illinois. There is no proof of funds that Meridien can complete the project.

Cory Leonard said there was no third party noise study and the application is incomplete.

Sarah Cooper said her family will live in the footprint of the wind farm and don't have concerns for their children's health because of the turbines.

Judi Graff asks if there are comparable projects with similar population size and turbine size. Mr. Woo hasn't looked into any comparables.

Bret Farmer asked if shadow flicker on the roads was a concern. Mr. Woo said they have not studied this. But have been told that it is not an issue. It is like trees shading the roads. The area road commissioner has talked to other commissioners with wind turbines and they have said it is not a concern.

Larry Baker wanted to know about the map of towers and how far are they allowed to move towers for adjustments if required. Will D'Andrea said they are limited on how much they are allowed to adjust tower placement. Any changes would require a new noise study. The building permit process ensures limited change in placement. Modifications might require the project to go through zoning process again.

Public comments are closed since no one new wished to speak.

Board discusses conditions

The 38 conditions from previous proposal were accepted.

Additional conditions:

1. The applicant shall provide mitigation to non-participating land owners that are affected by shadow flicker (landscaping, screening, shades/blinds);
2. The applicant shall enter into an aerial application agreement with non participating land owners stating that the applicant will agree to work with farmers and the aerial applicators (shut down and turn blades to create spray lanes) to allow for aerial application;
3. The applicant shall provide to non-participating land owners, both within the project and within 1/3 mile of the project a yearly payment of \$750.00 per parcel and shall provide to each occupant family of a house, both within the project and within 1/3 mile of the project a yearly payment of \$250.00 for each turbine within a 3,000 foot radius of the house (ie. If there are 2 turbines within 3,000 feet of a house the occupants of that house will receive \$500.00);
4. If building permits for the towers have not been issued within five (5) years of the date of Conditional Use approval, the approval shall expire and a new Conditional Use application will be required;

The IDNR compliance recommendations will be removed.

The details and enforcement of gifts will be for the county board to consider, as well as the issue of property value insurance.

Bret Farmer made a motion to approve the conditions. Rick Sheley seconded the motion.

Yes: Doug Thompson, Rick Sheley, Judi Graff, Bret Farmer

No:

Facts and Findings were discussed.

Conditions were revisited. The applicant shall repair any existing waterways, important for farm drainage and soil erosion control, that might be damaged during the construction or maintenance of the project and avoid adversely affecting compliance with existing State and Federal contracts that might apply to those waterways. Clarified language regarding payments to home occupants in 3000 ft radius.

Bret Farmer motioned to accept the additional conditions. Rick Sheley seconded the motion.

Yes: Bret Farmer, Rick Sheley, Doug Thompson, Judi Graff

No:

Bret Farmer motioned to approve Meridien's application for conditional use with attached conditions. Rick Sheley seconded the motion.

Yes: Bret Farmer, Doug Thompson

No: Judi Graff, Rick Sheley

Motion fails to pass.

Other business: none

Zoning officer's report: none

Rick Sheley motioned to adjourn. Bret Farmer seconded the motion.

Motion passes.

Respectfully submitted,

Judi Graff, ZBA secretary